

May the Grainery Fall on Your Head

Written by Dr. Harold R. Carpenter - Last Updated Saturday, 13 August 2011 20:21



Dr. Harold & Myrna
Carpenter

TEXT: Luke 10:1-6, 17-18

1 Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. **2** And He was saying to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. **3** "Go your ways; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. **4** "Carry no purse, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way. **5** "And whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.' **6** "And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you.

17 And the seventy returned with joy , saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." **18** And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

INTRODUCTION:

Tchad is a landlocked country in North Central Africa where the arid Sahara desert begins to give way to scrub brush and finally become the dense tropical jungle of the Congo.

I remember stepping off the plane in Ndjamina in 1997 was like stepping into a heated oven. The temperature was 130 degrees in the daytime and nights were like prolonged sauna baths.

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A few days later we ploughed through the desert sands in a land cruiser heading south to Moundou. As the desert gave way first to scrub brush and then to jungle foliage the temperature moderated to a comfortable 90 + degrees. The improvement in temperature was off-set by the clouds of mosquitos in the South.

I also remember well the day my teeth began to chatter and my body shook with chills and fever. The temperature was more than 100 but even though I was covered from head to feet with four thick wool blankets I just couldn't get warm. It is at times like these that a person asks himself, "Why am I here?" After three days of fever and convulsions in a small round mud hut with a straw roof and a grass floor I finally quit asking the question.

With a Chadian pastor I went to visit the village elders who were Muslim to request permission to show videos on the side of a house. I told them that we would start with some marvelous Moody Science Films showing the marvels of God's creation. Then we would show the Jesus Film, but would allow anyone to leave who wished to before we began the projection of this film. (It pays to be courteous and it pays to be open and above board).

That night we hung a bed sheet on the side of a house to serve as a makeshift screen. CBC students sang lively Christian choruses in French which they did not understand. The enthusiasm was contagious and by the time it was dark enough to show the film more than 2500 people had gathered in the open area around the house. Ohs and Ahs sounded constantly as these simple Africans saw the marvels of God's creation revealed. When the science film was finished we showed the Edward the Elephant film on the causes and prevention of AIDS.

When I announced that we would now be showing the Jesus Film I thought there would be a mass exodus. The opposite proved to be true. The crowd grew even louder.

I think the response to the film that night was the most unusual I have ever seen. The people booed loudly when Judas betrayed the Lord, some wept openly as they watched the scenes of the crucifixion, and the entire crowd broke into tremendous applause as Christ came forth from the grave, leaving behind an empty tomb.

Because of the darkness and the lack of order in the crowd we could not get an accurate count of those who accepted the Lord as Saviour that night, but it was well over 50 people.

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A few days later I was asked to accompany the African pastor to a nearby village to visit some people who had come to the village of Moundou to see the films. As I entered the small round mud hut an elderly Tchadian stood and greeted me with very strange words, "May the grainery fall on your head." I assumed that he was wishing some evil on me for having shared the Gospel message with a largely Muslim crowd. A single lady missionary working as a Bible translator was accompanying us in our visit to the village. She explained to me that this was not a condemnation but a very special greeting of love and thanksgiving.

In this region of Tchad there is only scrub brush with no trees or shade from the scorching sun. When the elderly become too feeble to tend the sheep and goats or to work in the fields they are left at the housing corral. The only place to find relief from the heat and sun is underneath the grainery. These are constructed by building a platform on poles some four feet above the ground and building a mud dome over this in which to store the grain safe from animals and insects.

What the expression, "May the grainery fall on your head." Really means, "May you live so long that the poles of the grainery rot away before you die." It is both a blessing and an expression of gratitude for some extraordinary service you may have rendered to the person or his family. What this Muslim man was saying was, "Thank you so much for having brought the good news of the Gospel to us. May God reward you with an exceptionally long life."

I was humbled by his thanksgiving for my having simply fulfilled my duty to God and to my neighbor. As I stood there rejoicing with this former Muslim family who now knew the joy of the Lord, I thought of the words of Jesus in our text for tonight. "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning." Satan's kingdom had suffered a great defeat and the angels of heaven were rejoicing in the salvation of this Tchadian family and the many others who had found Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Tonight let me highlight briefly just a few significant truths from these words of our Lord in chapter ten of Luke's Gospel:

I. THE WORLD IS VIEWED AS GOD'S HARVEST FIELD

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- A. Jesus sent the Twelve and the Seventy as harvesters.
- B. Jesus indicated that the harvest is great.
- C. A crop is not planted to be left in the field.

II. JESUS RECRUITED WORKERS FOR THE HARVEST

- A. The Seventy and the Church are commanded to pray for laborers.
- B. The Seventy were commissioned to go.
 - 1. They were sent with authority.
 - 2. They were sent with a clear purpose.
 - a. No purse, no bag, no shoes, no clothes.
 - b. Do not greet people along the way.
 - c. Do not let things or relationships hinder you in the harvest.
- C. The Seventy ministered effectively.
 - 1. The sick were healed.
 - 2. The demon possessed were delivered.
 - 3. The lost were saved.
- D. The results were varied
 - 1. Some would receive the message with joy.
 - 2. Some would reject the message with hostility.
 - 3. The responsibility of the laborer is to do what God has called him to do.
 - 4. The results are from the Lord.

CONCLUSION:

The harvest is far greater than it ever was before.
The time is far shorter for harvesting than it has ever been.
The commission is the same.
The authority is the same.
The heart of the Lord is the same, "Pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send more laborers into the harvest."
We are called upon:

- To witness.
- To give.
- To go.
- To pray.
- To be obedient to His will for our lives!

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This is the outline a sermon Dr. Harold Carpenter preached at Fair Grove Assembly of God, Fair Grove MO. Dr. Carpenter and his wife served as missionaries for twenty years. Dr. Carpenter also taught missions for twenty years at Central Bible College. He now serves as Pastor of Fair Grove Assembly of God, Fair Grove MO.

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